



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

The volume ends with four Appendices. In the first of these, Professor Poulton collects Darwin's arguments against the hypothesis of multiple origins of species. In the second, he brings together, in like manner, Darwin's utterances on evolution by mutation. In the third he returns to the æsthetic question, and proves that scientific work was necessary to Darwin's physical well-being. In the fourth he unearths a divergence of opinion, as between de Vries and certain of his followers, on the subject of the hereditary transmission of fluctuating variations. But surely the divergence is apparent only; the author has failed to distinguish between minute variation that is ancestrally determined and the fluctuation exhibited by pure lines.

TH. WALTERS.

*The Family and the Nation, a Study in Natural Inheritance and Social Responsibility.* By W. C. D. and C. D. WERTHAM. Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1909. pp. viii, 233.

This interesting and well-written essay is a reasoned plea for a practical eugenics. Civilization is in danger from the lessening of the action of natural selection; of late years, the means of keeping alive the falling and the fallen have grown with ever-increasing speed; and humanitarianism has tended towards sentimentality. At the same time, the social organism has grown self-conscious; there is a new-won appreciation of the issues at stake. Hence it is in order to inquire how far selection, natural and artificial, has been the means of developing the race, how far it is still acting and in what directions, what will be the effect of that action, and whether it can be controlled in any way to favor the preponderance of the best physical, mental and moral qualities.

If selection is to work, individuals must vary, variation must be inherited, and certain kinds of inherited variation must reproduce themselves at a quicker than average rate. We shall, therefore, in the pursuit of the inquiry outlined above, begin with the consideration of the laws of variation and of heredity. The authors give, first, a general discussion of the scientific study of these topics, illustrating them by reference to simple cases of Mendelian inheritance, of normal distribution, etc.; incidentally they show that Galton's law of ancestral inheritance may be reconciled with the Mendelian principle of particulate inheritance if, instead of a single individual, we consider large numbers: "the frequency of Mendelian dominance would produce, on the average of large numbers, greater resemblances of children to their parents than to their grandparents and to more distant ancestors." They then treat, chiefly on the basis of Galton's work, of inheritance and variation in mankind. Special chapters are devoted to the inheritance of mental defect and ability, and to the rise and decline of families. At this point the authors turn to the third condition of the operation of selection, the necessity of reproduction, and discuss in three chapters the birth-rate, the selective birth-rate: its effects, and the decline in the birth-rate: its causes. "In the British Isles certainly, and probably in Western Europe generally, the best elements of the population are increasing, if they increase at all, at a much slower rate than the less worthy stocks, and, in some cases at any rate, the better classes are actually diminishing in number." The outcome must be deterioration, and eventually the passing of the race. Why, then, do the worthier classes desire to restrict their offspring? The authors find a number of contributory causes: the feeling of overwhelming responsibility towards children, expense, the advent in society of persons whose newly acquired wealth is not associated with definite territorial or local traditions, the cult of games, the restless-

ness and uncertainty of modern life in various professions, the freedom of women, etc. Fortunately, the reserve of health, strength and ability in the people is still very great; and, fortunately, the tone of public opinion may be changed by the influence and example of those who are awake to the danger. Mr. and Mrs. Whetham accordingly end their work, in a fairly hopeful spirit, with the following appeal: "Encourage in all ways early marriages and large families for men and women of health, strength and ability; discourage both marriage and offspring where either parental stock is unsound in body or mind." The advice is admirably sound, and the hopefulness, in all probability, is not misplaced. For there is nothing that so much strikes the outside observer of recent public opinion in England as the steady progress made, in spite of prudishness and conservatism, by the new creed of eugenics. S. POST.

*The Autobiography, a Critical and Comparative Study*, by A. R. BURR.  
Boston & New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909. pp. viii, 451.  
Price, \$2.00 net.

In this *Journal*, xix, 415, I called attention to the first volume of Professor Misch's *Geschichte der Autobiographie*, a work planned and in part executed with the traditional German thoroughness. Mrs. Burr has, in the volume now before us, treated of the autobiography in lighter vein. Writing on the basis of "two hundred and sixty capital autobiographies," she has produced a very interesting book, literary in flavor, psychological in suggestion, which should do much to arouse her readers to further and more intensive study of a fascinating subject.

Mrs. Burr may be quoted, in large measure, as her own reviewer. "The indication is plain," she writes, "that a subjective trend of thought made its appearance in literature, rather suddenly than slowly, during the first three hundred years of the Christian era. Examination of its early manifestations shows the primal cause to be religious emotion: for the second type of the subjective document—the scientific—did not make its appearance until the sixteenth century [ch. iii, History]. When one turns to the documents themselves, an investigation begins most naturally with a comparison of the reasons for writing them, and of the attitudes they take, with like attitudes in diaries and in letters. . . . Works written according to the autobiographical intention are written 'as if no one in the world were to read them, yet with the purpose of being read' [ch. ii, Classification and the Autobiographical Intention; ch. v, The Autobiography, the Diary, and the Letter]. Conformation to this standard permits us (always within recognized limits) to believe in their sincerity and to trust their information" [ch. iv, Sincerity; ch. ix, the Autobiography in its relation to Fiction]. Julius Cæsar, St. Augustine and Girolamo Cardano are considered as the three great archetypes of autobiography, and the latter's *De vita propria liber* receives a chapter to itself [chs. vi, vii]. After tracing the influence of these models upon later times [ch. viii], the author reaches a formulation of the law of the subjective self-study, which is "that its manifestations invariably precede and accompany movements of intellectual significance; and that, conversely, in times when great warlike activities and political upheavals make their special demand upon the objective energies of a people, the subjective record diminishes in proportion, or wholly disappears from literature" [ch. x]. This same chapter [The Autobiographical Group] also "attempts to give some conception of the part these documents may be permitted to play in sociological and historical investigation."

So far the first and general part of the book. The second and special